WA-II-501

Washington Monument

Architectural Survey File

This is the architectural survey file for this MIHP record. The survey file is organized reverse-chronological (that is, with the latest material on top). It contains all MIHP inventory forms, National Register nomination forms, determinations of eligibility (DOE) forms, and accompanying documentation such as photographs and maps.

Users should be aware that additional undigitized material about this property may be found in on-site architectural reports, copies of HABS/HAER or other documentation, drawings, and the "vertical files" at the MHT Library in Crownsville. The vertical files may include newspaper clippings, field notes, draft versions of forms and architectural reports, photographs, maps, and drawings. Researchers who need a thorough understanding of this property should plan to visit the MHT Library as part of their research project; look at the MHT web site (mht.maryland.gov) for details about how to make an appointment.

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Last Updated: 03-12-2004

1827; 1882; 1936 Builder: Isaac C. Lutz

Washington Monument is situated atop Monument Knob, originally called "The Blue Rock," a 1550-foot peak of South Mountain, located on the dividing line between Washington and Frederick Counties, 1 1/2 miles north of Alt U.S. 40. The monument is 24 feet in diameter at its base, and 40 feet high. Its tapering design is said to be that of a Revolutionary War cannon, but is often referred to as a "jug" or a "milk bottle." The wall is composed of huge stones, many weighing upwards of a ton. A doorway on the east side of the structure leads to a stairway that ascends to an observation deck at the top. A series of white marble markers document the monument's construction on July 4, 1827, and restorations in 1882 and 1936. The original builder's stone inscribed "Built by Isaac C. Lutz 1827," was removed and in private ownership. The Appalachian Trail, which extends 2000 miles from Maine to Georgia, passes directly east of the monument and is used by visitors going to and from the monument.

Reportedly built in a single day, the monument was completed and dedicated on July 4, 1827. It is significant as the first monument to George Washington in the United States. (Although the better known monument at Mount Vernon Place in Baltimore was begun in 1815, the statue of George Washington was not installed atop it until 1929, and other work continued as late as 1843.) Vandals and the elements had reduced the Washington County monument to a mere few feet in height by the time of the Civil War. In this

tumbled down condition the monument served as a Union Signal Station during the Battle of Antietam and after the Battle of Gettysburg while General Lee's army lingered north of the Potomac River.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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Washington Monument is situated atop Monument Knob, originally called "The Blue Rock," a 1,550 foot peak of the South Mountain. This peak is located on the dividing line between Washington and Frederick counties, four (4) miles east of Boonsboro, Washington County, and one and a half (1 1/2) miles north of Alternate U. S. 40 at Zittlestown, Washington County.

The Department of Forests and Parks owns 104 acres, known as Washington Monument State Park. The remainder is either privately owned or state woodlands.

The monument covers approximately 1600 square feet, is fifty-four feet in circumference at its base and fifteen feet high.

It's design is said to be that of a Revolutionary War cannon, but is often referred to as a "jug" or a "milk bottle." The cornice of the monument is thirty-two (32) feet above it's four (4) foot high and twenty-six (26) foot square platform at the base. The cylindrical base of the monument is approximately twenty-four (24) feet in diameter and the body of the monument tapers to a diameter of sixteen (16) feet at the top. A doorway 3' x 7'1", on the east side of the structure leads to an observation area at the top. Twelve feet from the base of the monument upon the west side, fronting Boonsboro, is inserted a white marble slab, with the following inscription: 'Erected in memory of Washington, July 4, 1827, by the citizens of Boonsboro.'

J. Thomas Scharf's history The History of Western Maryland quotes from the July 1827 "Torch-Light," a Hagerstown, Maryland, newspaper: "Pursuant to previous arrangements, the citizens of Boonsboro' assembled at the public square... to ascend the 'Blue Rocks', ... for the purpose of erecting a monument.... This spot was selected in consequence of the great facility with which the materials were furnished.

Scharf continues his comments, "The 'Blue Rocks' upon which the 'monument' was reared . . . consist of immense quantities of loose rock, ranging in size from a pound to many tons, and are scattered over the top and down the slope of the mountain in confused masses."

The "Niles Weekly Register," published in Baltimore, Maryland, on July 21, 1827, reported that: "The citizens of

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The national purport is evident in the patriotic continuity and persistent spirit accompanying the original construction and the rebuilding of Washington County monument to George Washington, one of the world's oldest monuments erected to Washington. It is the first such monument to be completed and dedicated in the United States. Completed on July 4, 1827, it is probably the only monument of its size ever to be erected within a span of ONE day.

The 178 foot high Washington Monument erected at Mount Vernon Place, Baltimore City, Maryland, is acclaimed as the "first architectural monument erected in honor of Washington." It's corner stone was laid July 4, 1815, and the marble statue of Washington added atop the column in 1829. Construction continued until 1843. It was, therefore, completed sixteen years after the Washington County edifice. The "Torch-Light," a Hagerstown, Maryland, newspaper of July 1827, reported, . . as our object was not, to gratify our pampered appetites; consequently no sumptuous arrangements had been made, neither were toasts prepared for the occasion, but we enjoyed more heartfelt satisfaction in partaking of our simple fare than the most costly or high-scasoned dishes would have afford-Our thoughts and food were both highly spiced with the contemplation of our work, thereby needing no stimulents to excite an artificial appetite."

About 4 p.m. of that day the work had been accomplished. The cairn-like monument stood fifteen (15) feet high and measured fifty-four (54) feet in circumference at its base. A doorway in the east side opened to a stone stairway, leading through the stonework, to the top. Then after some prefatory observations an unidentified person appeared on one of the monument's steps and read the Declaration of Independence. A white marble slab bearing simply the words, "Erected in memory of Washington, July 4, 1827, by the citizens of Boonsboro" was then placed in the west side of the monument fronting Boonsboro, as three aged veterans of the American Revolution ascended the monument's steps and fired three rounds of mustetry from the top of the monument. The citizens then returned to their village, sober and in good order.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Recorder:

	Gerald Sword, Greenbriar St County.	tate	Pā	ark, Hagerstown	, N	Vashington	
	Williams, Thomas J. C.: A History of Washington County, Maryland, 1906, Baltimore, Maryland.						
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

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Washington Monument

#7. DESCRIPTION continued

Boonsborough, Maryland, on the anniversary, labored to erect a monument to Washington on the brow of the 'Blue Rocks.' It is composed of vast masses of rough stone, heaped together - 54 feet in circumference and will be 30 feet high." From this vantage point the panorama is spectacular.

The wall is composed of huge stone, many weighing upwards of a ton, with the whole center filled up with the same material. A flight of steps, commencing at the base and running through the body of the fabric, enables ascent to the top.

To the left of the doorway a white marble marker reads: "Built in memory of George Washington, July 4, 1827, by the citizens of Boonsboro and vicinity. Rebuilt July 4, 1882, by the members of South Mountain Encampment N. 25, I.O.O.F., William F. Smith, Elias Cost, Jacob B. Blecker, Committee." To the right of this doorway is another white marble marker inscribed; "This monument, the first erected to the memory of George Washington with 10 acres of land, was deeded to Maryland by the Washington County Historical Society and the citizens of Boonsboro 1934. Rebuilt 1936 to original design by Civilian Conservation Corps directed by the National Park Service and the State Department of Forestry."

The original builders stone inscribed, "Built by Isaac C. Lutz 1827," is presently (1970) in the possession of the heirs of the late Mr. Edwin Hoffman Pitcher.

On the west side of the monument a stone observation deck extends from a point approximately eight (8) feet below the top of the square top platform of the monument and overlooks the several acres of "blue rocks."

The Appalachin Thail, which extends 2,000 miles from Maine to Georgia, passes directly east of the monument and is used by visitors going to and from the monument.

In 1946, a small nuseum was erected at the base of Monument Knob by the Maryland Department of Forests and Parks, the successor to the Maryland State Department of Forestry. The building housed a collection of Indian artifacts, Civil War rifles and relics and other paraphernalia of local interest. During the past two (2) years the museum has been closed for extensive renovations. It is anticipated that it will reopen

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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Washington Monument .

#7. DESCRIPTION continued

during the 1971 tourist season as a visitor center. Camping, picknicking, play areas, trails and modern sanitary facilities are provided within Washington State Park. Last year the monument and park was visited by more than seventy-six thousand (76,000) tourists.

The monument overlooks the Hagerstown Valley and within fifteen (15) miles of the monument are located Antietam National Battlefield; Harpers Ferry National Historical Park; South Mountain Civil War Battlefield; Catoctin Mountain Park and Camp David; the memorial arch to Civil War Correspondents at Gathland State Park; the route General Edward Braddock followed toward Fort Duquesne; the eastern link of the National Road; the original route of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad toward Ohio; the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Monument; the Potomac River, the site of James Rumsey's experiments with steam-propelled navigation; and routes traveled and villages visited by George Washington before and after the American Revolution.

During the late 1920's, Edwin Hoffman Pitcher, Baltimore, Maryland, who has since died, removed from the monument site and from a nearby home three fragments of white marble bearing the inscription, "Built by Isaac C. Lutz 1827." James W. Foster, Director of the Maryland Historical Society, commented in the Baltimore Evening Sun, of August 19, 1952, that there was no real way of proving the stone's authenticity, but that he had no reason to doubt that it was what Mr. Pitcher claimed it to be. Mr. Harold Keats, writing for the Washington (D.C.) Sunday Star, on February 21, 1932, identified Isaac C. Lutz as, "the most skilled stone wall builder of his time" and that "the construction is similar to that of other of his buildings extant in the countryside."

Between 1934 and 1936 the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in cooperation with the Regional Architect, Orin M. Bullock, Jr., of the National Park Service, The State Park Emergency Conservation Work Program, and the Maryland State Department of Forestry, restored the monument. Mr. George Schindel, Hagerstown, the CCC superintendent during the restoration program, stated on December 22, 1970, that the stone remains of the former monument were carefully numbered and recorded and then completely disassembled. No trace of a below-surface foundation was located for the older monument. A foundation nine (9) feet deep and approximately thirty (30) feet square was then laid and the monument then reassembled. No coment materials had been used in the

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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Washington Monument

#7. DESCRIPTION continued

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original monuments construction, but when reassembled by the CCC nearly 670 tons of sand and approximately 1,000 barrels of cement was used. F.W. Besley, State Forester, Maryland Department of Forestry, stated during the July 4, 1936, rededication program that: "The monument has been completely rebuilt with a new foundation, but the same stones of the original monument have been put back in place. Every detail of the original structure has been followed in the restoration."

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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Washington Monument .

#8. SIGNIFICANCE continued

Thomas J. C. Williams, in his book entitled, A History of Washington County, Maryland, records the afterthought of one of the citizens: "as it was raised in much haste, all cannot boast the regular accuracy of perfect beauty; yet it possesses both solidity and durability—two important qualities. It has such strength as I think will preserve it for ages. Though rude and naked of all the charms of architecture, yet there is an everblooming spirit diffused even through the dry walls of such fabrics, as fully supplies the want of elegance. We do not calculate that it will give this town immortal glory, but we do sincerely hope that it will be the means of stirring up the fading gratitude of the people and bring back to their forgetful memories in fresh and glowing colors the peculiar circumstances of gratitude under which we are placed, both by God and man."

Later, after the farming season, the citizens returned to the "blue rock" and added fifteen (15) feet to the then top of the monument. For many years thereafter patriotic celebrations of the Boonsboro residents were held near their monument overlooking their village.

Time and vandals did not treat the monument kindly. By the time of the American Civil War the structure was only a few feet high. In this tumbled down condition the monument served as a Union Signal Station during the Battle of Antietam and after the Battle of Gettysburg while General Lee's army lingered north of the Potomac River. The editor of General D.H. Hills article, The Battle of South Mountain, Or Boonsboro, quoted an area resident as saying eight to ten feet of the monument had been tumbled down the steep mountain-side by "bad boys and wicked men who never knew there was a George Washington."

Through the efforts of Madeleine Vinton Dahlgren, the widow of Rear Admiral John Adolphus Bernard Dahlgren, U.S.N. (1809-1870) who had her summer home in the mountain pass below the monument, and the South Mountain Encampment No. 25, La Grange Lodge, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Boonsboro, a fund was established in 1882 which enabled the monument to be rebuilt; its walls stuccoed and an iron-framed canopy placed atop the thirty foot high structure. A roadway, over which carriages could pass, was constructed to the monument site; prior to this time access was only by foot or on horseback. In August nearly 3,000 persons gathered by the monument for the rededication program. Maryland's Governor, The Honorable William T. Hamilton,

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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Washington Monument .

#8. SIGNIFICANCE continued

as the principal speaker, addressed the assemblage and the Frederick bar.

Twenty years later, either because of a stroke of lightning or faulty construction, a rent appeared in the stonework causing the structure again to become a ruin.

On February 14, 1907, the citizens of Boonsboro and vicinity again rallied to save their monument and formed the Society for the Protection and Rebuilding of the First Monument to The late Senator Harvey S. Bomberger and the late House member David John Lewis were instrumental in this preservation movement which lead to the purchase of the monument and one acre of surrounding land by the Washington County Historical Society, Hagerstown, Maryland, in August 1922. Through the continued efforts of these organizations, the citizens of Boonsboro and local civic and patriotic organizations, Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Side Camp SP-1, was established at the monument on July 22, 1934. During the next two years, under the direction of the National Park Service and the Maryland State Department of Forestry, the CCC boys restored the monument to its first design, under the supervision of Orin M. Bullock, Jr. the item CCC architect. Some of the CCC boys were from the local area and like their predecessors over a century before many were laborers and mechanics.

On July 6, 1936, hundreds of persons assembled by the side of the monument for a rededication program. Pagents by veterans of the World War and speeches by Dr. H.C. Byrd, President of the University of Maryland, F.W. Besley, Head of the Maryland State Department of Forestry, the late Senator Harvey S. Bomberger's son and Mr. Herbert Evison, of the National Park Service, were the order of the day.

Starting as a simple act of respect and admiration for Washington by a small volunteer group of patriotic citizens of a remote village in the Appalachian Mountains, the monument inspired subsequent generations of the same community for over a century to voluntarily repair and restore their monument. Eventually, in an effort to share their patriotic heritage with others, the local citizens presented the first completed and dedicated monument to Washington to the State of Maryland, for all to enjoy.

(5 of 7 continuation sheets)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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Washington Monument

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INTERVIEWS:

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Boonsboro, Maryland Telephone: (301-432-5116)

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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Schindel, George L. (Mr.), Retired former Civilian Conservation Corps Supervisor during restoration of the Washington Monument

957 Mulberry Avenue

Hagerstown, Maryland Telephone: (301-739-4574)

Beckenbaugh, Helen (Mrs.), Retired teacher and present secretary of Boonsboro Historical Society, Boonsboro, Maryland. Boonsboro, Maryland Telephone: (301-432-8160)

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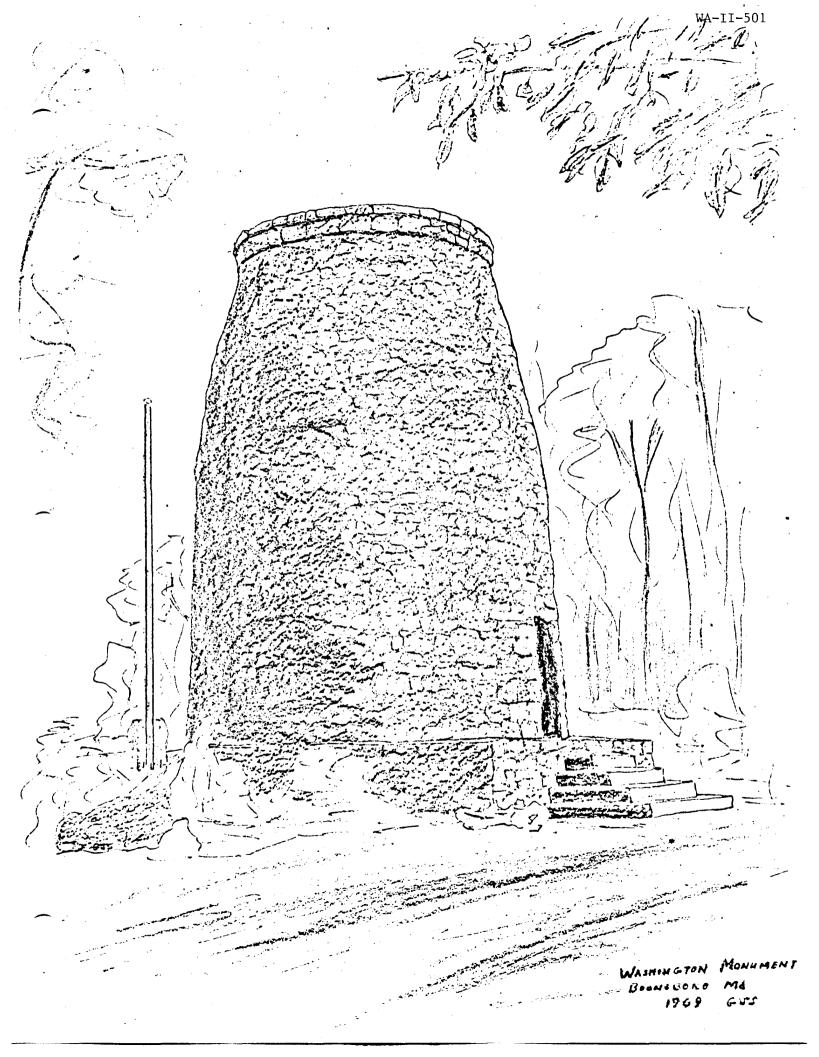
MISCELLANEOUS:

Markers, the three (3) white marble, set into the monument.

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George Washington Monument. The First Ever Erected to His Memory, and was Built by Citizens of Boonsboro, in 1827.

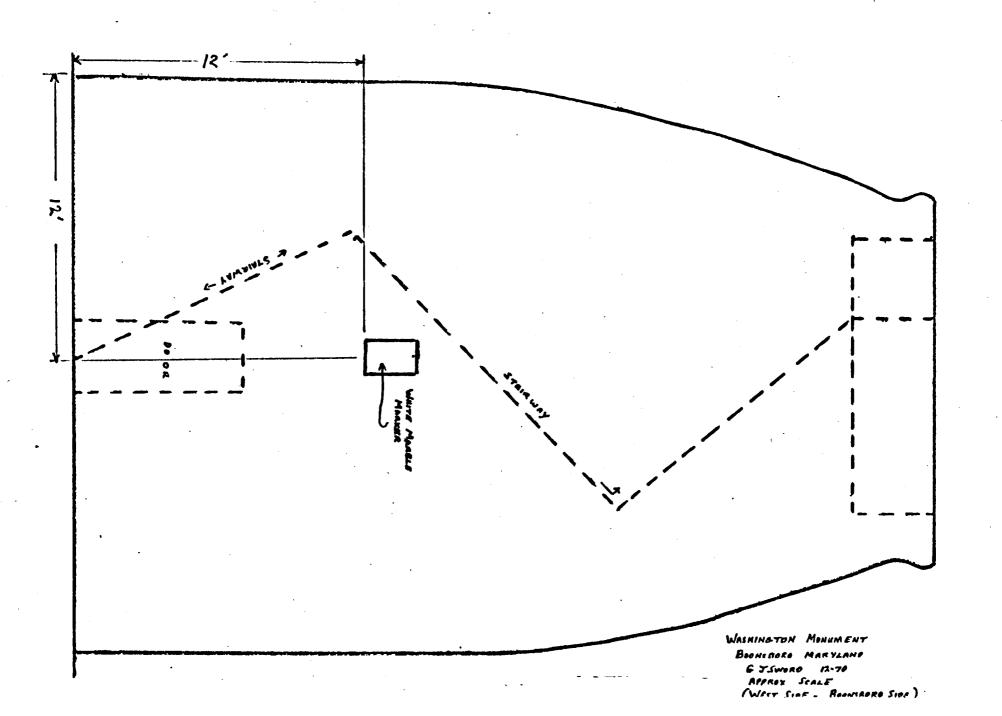
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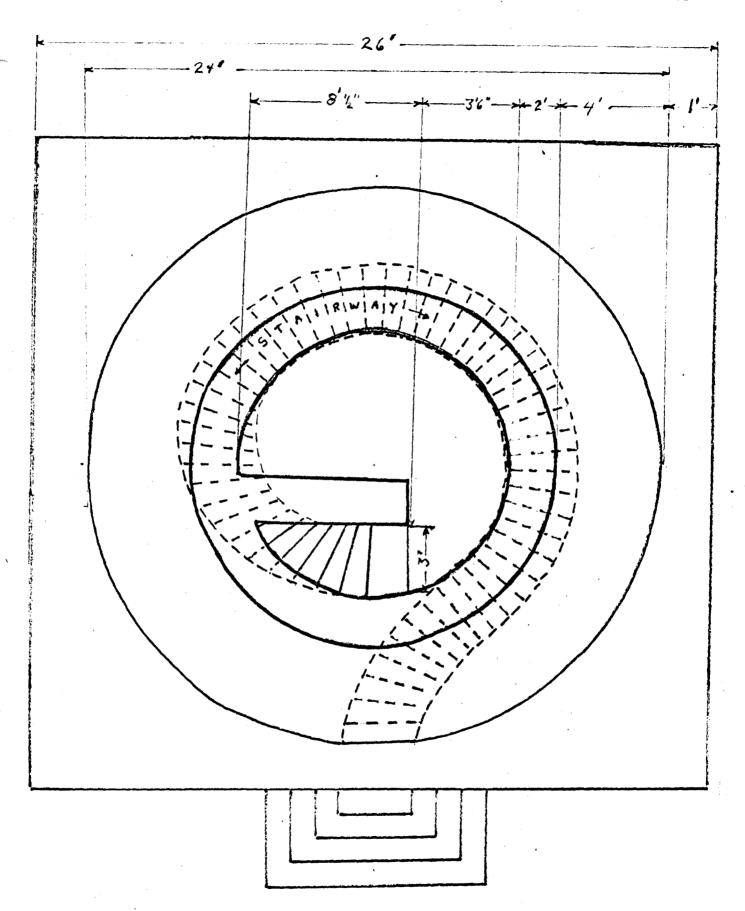
By THOMAS J.C. WILLIAMS

PUB: JOHN M. RUNK & L. R. TITSWORTH

1906

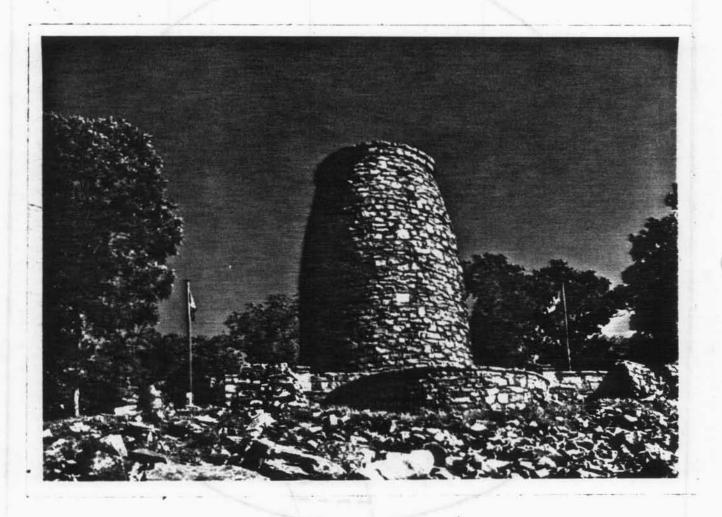
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WASHINGTON MONUMENT
BOOMS BOOK BOOK MARYLAND
GT SWORD 12-TO
NO SCALE
(TOP)

WA-11-501 WASHINGTON MONUMENT Washington County







SOUTH AND CAST SIDE of WASHINGTON MONUMENT, JAN 3, 1971.

NOTE: STONE WALL ON LEFT SIDE of
PHOTO IS PART OF THE OBSERVATION
PHOTOM WALL BUILT BY CIVILIAN
CONSERVATION CORPS 1934-1936.

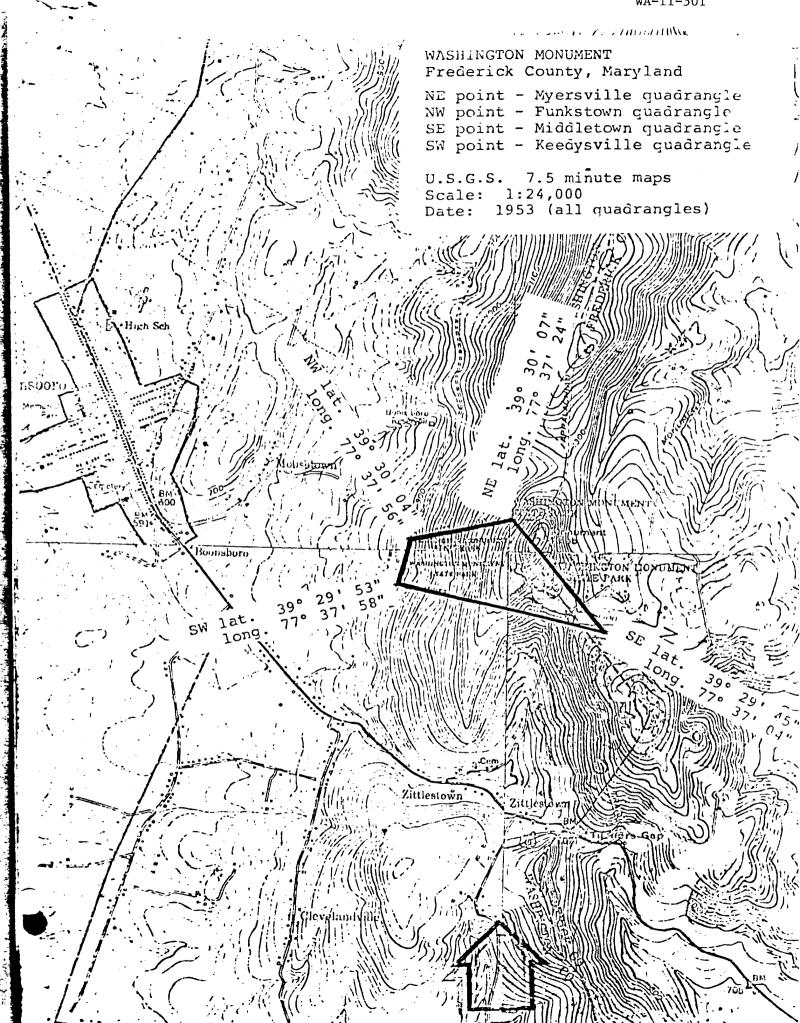
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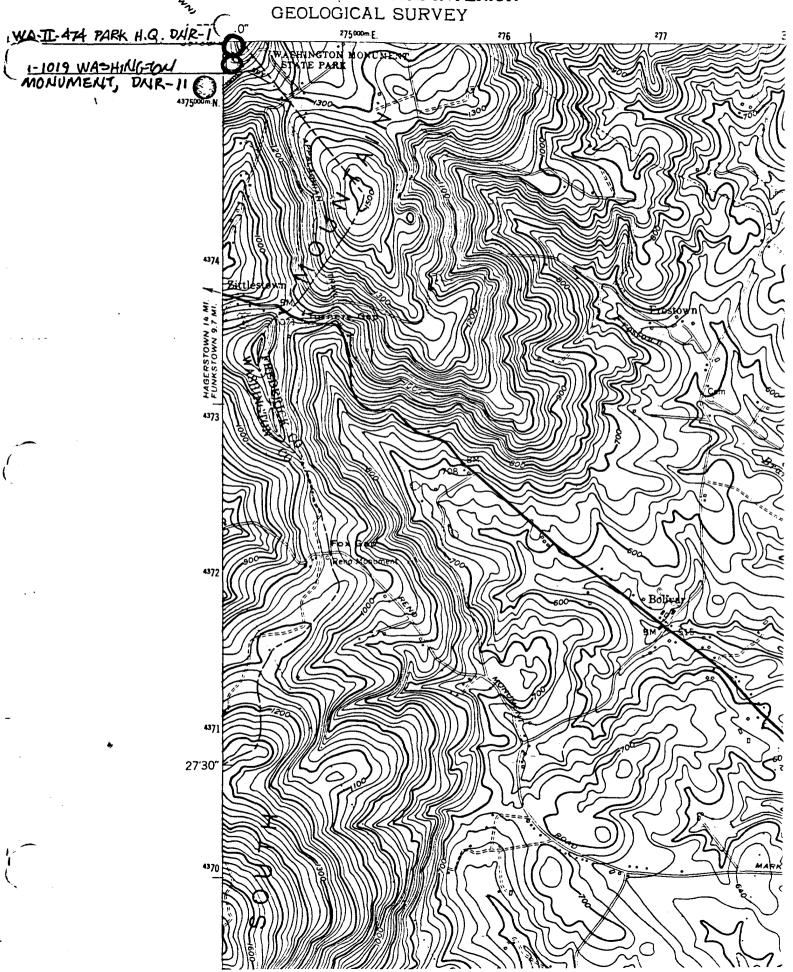
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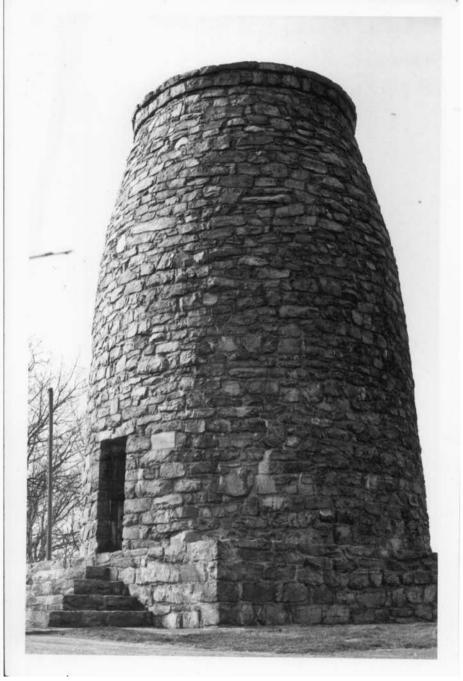


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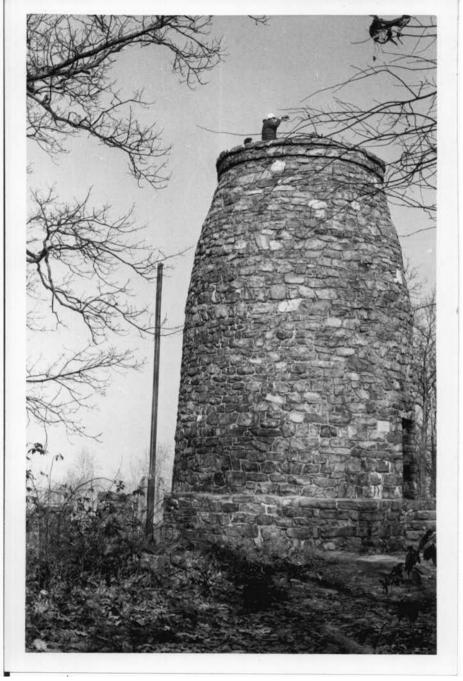




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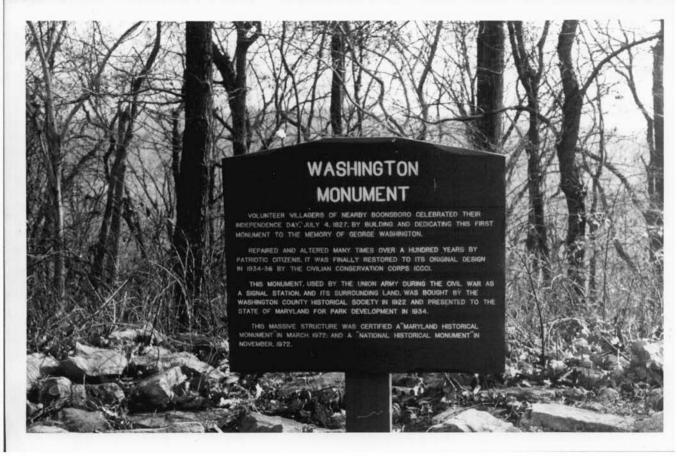
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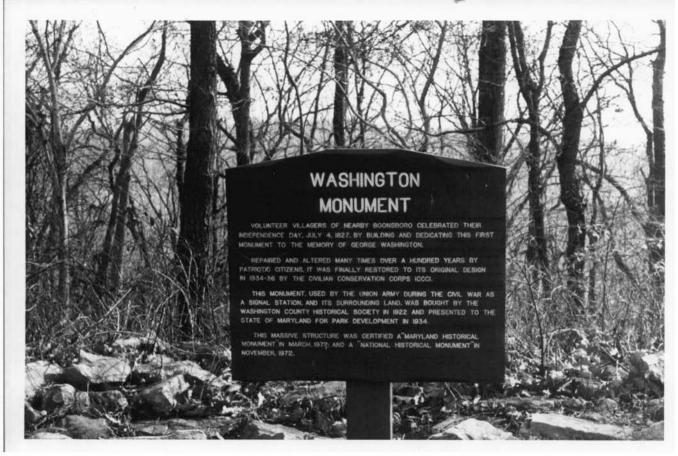
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Coconington Monument St. Park View from Monument New. 1918

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Montiment base, S.w. view WA-11-501
Nov. 1978

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